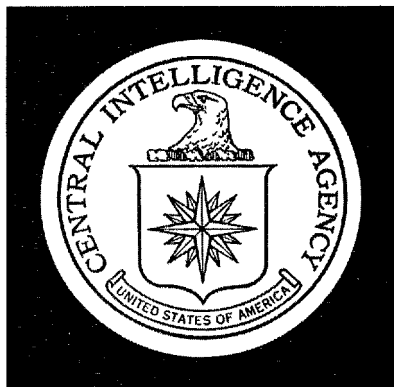


Confidential

65

25X1



DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

Intelligence Memorandum

The Soviet Party Central Committee Meeting

Confidential

50

21 June 1967
No. 0661/67

WARNING

This document contains information affecting the national defense of the United States, within the meaning of Title 18, sections 793 and 794, of the US Code, as amended. Its transmission or revelation of its contents to or receipt by an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.

GROUP 1 EXCLUDED FROM AUTOMATIC DOWNGRADING AND DECLASSIFICATION

Approved For Release 2005/12/24 : CIA-RDP79T00826A002100010065-1

STAT

Approved For Release 2005/12/24 : CIA-RDP79T00826A002100010065-1

CONFIDENTIAL

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
21 June 1967

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

The Soviet Party Central Committee Meeting

1. The meeting of the central committee of the Soviet Communist Party which opened in Moscow yesterday resumed this morning. We expect this to be the concluding session. So far as is known now there were two main topics on the agenda: the Middle East problem and some internal party business. Party chief Brezhnev gave a speech on the first topic and we anticipate that this or a resolution by the central committee, or both, will be broadcast and published in Moscow later in the day.

2. Like Premier Kosygin's trip to New York and President Podgorny's visit to Cairo, the central committee plenum has both propaganda and practical political purposes with respect to the Middle East problem. Of the three developments, the meeting in Moscow is probably the least significant. This assembly of party stalwarts (191 full members and 164 candidate members, mostly men of consequence in the Soviet political and managerial structure) has some weight in domestic affairs, but now, as in the past, its role in foreign policy is slight. In this latter sphere it is in no sense a deliberative body, but, rather, provides a platform from which to enunciate a general line of policy and a device for attaching formal party sanction to this policy. The party leaders are certainly not calling on the central committee to help them chart a course of action with regard to the Middle East. The outline of Soviet diplomatic tactics has already been established (in the party politburo with the support of the Foreign Ministry) and, for all practical purposes, the committee is in a position only to consent, not to advise.

CONFIDENTIAL

3. Nevertheless, at this stage it is evidently thought useful, and perhaps politically prudent, to give the committee some idea of where the USSR stands now and where it intends to go next with respect to the Middle East. The members of the committee are for the most part well aware of how much economic and military aid Moscow has committed to the area, and there are, no doubt, some party functionaries who have all along deplored this investment which has inevitably reduced the resources available for domestic purposes.

4. The party meeting also serves some of the same purposes as did the summit meeting of Eastern European leaders in Moscow on 9 June to which it is in some ways analogous. It fortifies the Soviet diplomatic position by bringing forth a display of solid domestic support. It provides the occasion for some oratory meant mainly to comfort the Arabs, sharper in tone perhaps than it was thought appropriate for Kosygin to enunciate at the UN.

5. However, either of these purposes could have been accomplished as well or better if the committee had been convened before Kosygin's departure for New York or after his return. In the first instance, the Soviet premier could have come to the UN with the central committee's endorsement already in hand. There would have been some advantage also in holding the meeting after Kosygin's return so that he could report on the General Assembly meeting and on his reading of US policy. If the intention had been to give the committee a full assessment of the state of affairs in the Middle East, it would have made sense to await the completion of President Podgorny's mission to Cairo, which began only a few hours after the committee began its session in Moscow.

CONFIDENTIAL

Approved For Release 2005/12/24 : CIA-RDP79T00826A002100010065-1

25X1

6. There is a strong suspicion, therefore, that the precise timing of the meeting was influenced by internal political considerations of a rather petty sort, namely to give the party chief, Brezhnev, his moment in the center of the stage. Otherwise, it might be supposed that Kosygin, whose UN speech was fully reported in the Soviet press and carried on TV via communications satellite, loomed larger in the present crisis than Brezhnev and that the party was failing to provide guidance to its junior partner, the Soviet Government.

7. The committee would doubtless have met some time this month in any case in fulfillment of the statutory requirement that it do so at least once every six months (last meeting, December 1966). There was, in fact, other business to be transacted, apart from the Middle East, and this seems to have been done. For one thing, Yuri Andropov, who last month was appointed to head the Soviet security service (KGB) has probably given up his job in the party's chief administrative organ, the secretariat, and the central committee has to approve such a change formally. Press reports from Moscow indicate that this matter has been dealt with. Also on the docket was the presentation of so-called "Theses for the 50th Anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution," which will lay out the ideological framework for the anniversary celebrations next fall.

8. We have considered the possibility that there may have been repercussions from the Middle East crisis affecting the Soviet hierarchy in a more significant way. There is no indication of such developments at the central committee's meeting and, in view of the absence from the country of two of the leading political figures, Kosygin and Podgorny, we think it unlikely that these have occurred.

Approved For Release 2005/12/24 : CIA-RDP79T00826A002100010065-1

CONFIDENTIAL

25X1

Confidential

Confidential

STAT

Approved For Release 2005/12/24 : CIA-RDP79T00826A002100010065-1

Approved For Release 2005/12/24 : CIA-RDP79T00826A002100010065-1